SAFETY ALERT

Hazards of Under-Inflated Tire

Under-inflated tires can lead to premature tire wear, blowouts, and other tire damage, as well as a decrease in vehicle handling characteristics (reduction of steering control, braking, etc.). These factors can contribute to the cause of a vehicle accident that could have been avoided. It is essential that operators (and their supervisors) ensure that before, during, and after operation, preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) are performed on a daily basis. This also applies to any non-tactical vehicle (NTV) that is driven.

Know what the proper tire pressure is for your particular vehicle. It is not the "maximum tire pressure", annotated on the sidewall of the tire. The proper inflation limits for tires are based on the vehicle's designed load limit and the tire size, as set by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The tire and vehicle manufacturers also provide this information.

Where to Find the Proper Inflation Pressure and Load Limit Information?

- **Vehicle Owner's Manual**
- **Placard on**
  - **Door Edge**
  - **Door Post**
  - **Glove Box**
  - **Inside Trunk Lid**

According to a survey released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 27 percent of cars and 32 percent of vans, pickups and sport utility vehicles had at least one tire that was under-inflated. Eight percent of light trucks and 3 percent of cars had all four tires under-inflated. The survey considered a tire under inflated if it was eight pounds per square inch or more below the vehicle manufacturer's recommended inflation pressure. That's 25 percent for a common recommended inflation pressure of 32psi.

The survey estimates low tire pressure kills as many as 79 people a year with as many as 10,635 people a

Although individual operators may not have a tire gauge, they can take their NTV to any motor pool to use a tire gauge to check their tires. In addition, operators can also use the self-help facilities at any AAFES garage or commercial filling station that offers air/tire service to check their tires.

The importance of checking tire inflation and performing PMCS must be stressed during initial operator training/licensing programs and incorporated into unit refresher driver training and safety programs.

Learn More – Go to NHTSA Homepage (http://www.nhtsa.gov)